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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USOSCE 000286

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR VCI/CCA, EUR/RPM,
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OSD FOR ISA/PERENYI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/26/2018
TAGS: [KCFE](#) [OSCE](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: CFE/JCG: RUSSIA CONFIRMS WILL NOT PROVIDE ANNUAL
DATA; NEXT JCG SESSION NOT POSTPONED

REF: A. STATE 124598
[1](#)B. USOSCE 00278

Classified By: Chief Arms Control Delegate Hugh Neighbour,
for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: The 25 November plenary adopted a decision that ends the present JCG session on 16 December and sets the first plenary of the next session on 20 January. The U.S. joined consensus, but expressed disappointment that the start of the next JCG session could not be delayed despite a lack of substantive JCG meetings. On the margins of the JCG, Russia's chief delegate confirmed that Russia would not participate in the December annual data exchange, but like last year, would only provide aggregated data in CFE categories. Meanwhile, Allies in Vienna are planning to deliver a joint statement at the 16 December JCG to express regret over Russia's expected failure to complete the required information exchange this year and to reaffirm their commitment to CFE. End Summary.

Next JCG Session Begins January 20, i.e., as "normal"

[1](#)2. (SBU) The Joint Consultative Group (JCG) met on November 25 under the Chairmanship of Russia. The draft decision on the duration of the present session was adopted (JCG.DD/3/08). The decision sets the last meeting of the present session on December 16. The first meeting of the next session will be on January 20. The U.S. (Neighbour) joined consensus on the decision, but expressed U.S. disappointment (Ref a) that the idea of delaying the start of the next JCG session was not seriously considered. Neighbour noted that while the U.S. and others have used the JCG this year to highlight instances of Russian noncompliance, other discussions concerning actual CFE implementation have been rare.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The U.S. (Neighbour) also expressed the hope that incoming JCG Chairmen will give due consideration to ensuring that JCG meetings are scheduled only when required for meaningful discussion of CFE issues. Work to be done should inform the group how frequently it should schedule JCG meetings. Neighbour stressed that JCG meetings should not be scheduled and convened "simply as pro forma calendar

fillers," that Chairmen should consider adjustments to the indicative schedule as appropriate during the session.

Russia to Raise Role of JCG on 9 December

14. (SBU) Russia (Ulyanov) said that the JCG should be engaged in more substantive discussions and that, ultimately, this depended on the U.S. In the absence of "political will," he commented that JCG meetings would continue to be quick meetings, simply "marking time" and "reading off agendas." Ulyanov also suggested that we think of how the JCG can play a role in "saving CFE." He said Russia will bring up this issue on 9 December and urged other delegations to express their views.

15. (SBU) Ulyanov said States Parties should try at least to come up with the "lowest common denominator" for discussion in the JCG. He commented that another possible topic for the 9 December JCG could be the idea of "fragmentation," or "separating out" parts of the Parallel Actions Package for detailed work. Ulyanov stressed that Russia considered nothing to be agreed until all was agreed, and so at the same time was "categorically opposed" to breaking up the Parallel Actions Package. Obviously referring to the U.S. intervention, he warned that by holding fewer JCG meetings, States Parties might send a "bad political sign" that we have in fact "buried CFE."

16. (C) Comment: USDel expects that Ulyanov's pitch will be the same as we heard in Fall 2007, on the margins of the

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February 2008 NRC-ACE, and again in Vienna later that spring.

Inter alia, that the JCG should hold substantive discussions on parts of the Parallel Actions Package, including a definition of "substantial combat forces" and terms for accession to A/CFE. These would be plugged in to the Parallel Actions Package as each was completed. Quad Allies are already primed to join the USDel in rejecting Russia's approach. End comment.

Russian Comments to USDel -- Only Aggregate Data

17. (C) In a brief meeting after the JCG with USDel (Neighbour), Ulyanov again urged the U.S. to provide its view of why Russia's suspension is not provided for by the &CFE Treaty or customary international law," and invited the U.S. to do so soon, including while Russia was in the Chair. Russia would raise this issue again in the plenary. (Note: USDel has requested Ref b cleared language to refute Russia's bogus contentions. End note.)

18. (C) Turning to the next JCG, Ulyanov said he will make the point that the JCG should assume a substantive role to "help solve the CFE impasse." He asserted that the Fried/Antonov channel would demand work on "details to support their work." These would need to be fleshed out elsewhere, such as in Vienna. Ulyanov also was eager to know how Georgia would be incorporated into U.S. proposals around the Istanbul commitments and when the U.S. would be ready to reactivate the Fried-Antonov channel. Neighbour declined to speculate.

19. (C) Ulyanov also commented that there were two reasons why Russia declined to agree to cancel the November 4 and 11 JCGs. The first reason was that Moscow might interpret missing two meetings in a row as "a lack of seriousness by all parties." The second, which he indicated with a smile, was that he believed "some delegations" were trying to delay Russia's chairmanship until 2009. Curiously to USDel, he said, that "the Europeans" had been "disingenuous" on this question, but that the U.S. had played a "correct role."

110. (C) Ulyanov also expressed interest in the 21 November HLTF. USDel (Neighbour) replied that the meeting showed, as

would be expected, that Allies are unified and will continue to observe all CFE Treaty obligations. Russia should look for details in CFE language in the upcoming NATO Ministerial communique. USDel urged Russia to resume CFE implementation, including providing data consistent with Russia's Treaty obligations, such as in December's data exchange. Ulyanov confirmed in reply that that Russia would not/not participate in the data exchange, but would (like last year) provide a one page aggregate of information of its holdings in CFE categories.

Moldova Will Fully Participate in Date Exchange

11. (SBU) Informally the Moldovan delegate (Cuc) told USDel (Neighbour) that Moldova intended to fully participate in this year's data exchange as required by CFE.

JCG-T at Helsinki

12. (C) Norway (Schroeder) as Chair of the next JCG-T has already drafted language for Allies' review for the use on 16 December in a joint statement. Discussion will continue at Helsinki. Schroeder has appropriately included the entire text on CFE from the upcoming NATO ministerial communique. As directed by the HLTF, he has also proposed a paragraph to address Russia's expected non-compliance on the annual data exchange. Schroeder has circulated this draft joint statement to NATO Allies, along with an agenda for the JCG-T meeting on 3 December on the margins of the Helsinki Ministerial. (Note: Schroeder says his para on the data exchange is directly lifted from U.S. language on this issue

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last year. End note.)

Next Meeting

13. (U) The next JCG Plenary will be on December 9 under the Chairmanship of Russia. The next JCG-T will be on December 3, chaired by Norway.
FINLEY